

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. A method of communicating with a peripheral computer system comprising the steps of:

 a) said peripheral computer system creating a communication link with a host computer system using one transport mechanism of a plurality of possible transport mechanisms;

10 b) said host computer system recognizing said one transport mechanism used in step a);

 c) said host computer system determining a communication protocol from a plurality of possible communication protocols based on said one transport mechanism used in step a); and

15 d) said host computer system communicating information to said peripheral computer system based on said communication protocol determined at step c).

20 2. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said plurality of transport mechanisms comprises: communication via a serial line coupled to said host computer; communication via a networked line coupled to said host computer using a network; communication via a wireless link to said host computer; and communication via the Internet.

3. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said communication protocol determined at step c) restricts data volume communicated to said peripheral computer system.

5 4. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said communication protocol determined at step c) selects a particular user authentication protocol performed to establish data communication between said peripheral computer system and said host computer system.

10 5. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said communication protocol determined at step c) selects a particular data encryption protocol performed to establish data communication between said peripheral computer system and host computer system.

15 6. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said communication protocol determined at step c) selects a particular data set that can be accessed by said peripheral computer system.

20 7. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said peripheral computer system is a personal digital assistant (PDA).

8. A method as described in Claim 1 and further comprising the step of e) updating said plurality of communication protocols wherein said step e) comprises the steps of:

e1) allowing a first set of said plurality of communication protocols to be updated by a system administrator, said first set applied to all users; and

e2) allowing a second set of said plurality of communication protocols to be updated by a given user, said second set applicable only to said given user.

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9. A system for communicating with a peripheral computer system comprising:

a) a host computer system;

b) a peripheral computer system;

10 c) a communication link between said host computer system and said peripheral computer system, said communication link being made on one transport mechanism of a plurality of transport mechanisms;

d) said host computer system operable to recognize said transport mechanism of a plurality of transport mechanisms;

15 e) said host computer system also operable to determine a communication protocol from a plurality of communication protocols based on said transport mechanism used; and

20 f) said host computer system also operable to communicate information to said peripheral computer system based on said communication protocol determined in paragraph e).

10. The system of Claim 9 wherein:

g) said peripheral computer system operable to recognize said transport mechanism of said plurality of transport mechanisms;

h) said peripheral computer system also operable to determine said communication protocol from said plurality of communication protocols based on said transport mechanism used; and

5 i) said peripheral computer system also operable to communicate information to said host computer system based on said communication protocol determined in paragraph h)

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11. The system of Claim 9 wherein said plurality of transport mechanisms comprises: communication via a serial line coupled to said host
10 computer; communication via a networked line coupled to said host computer using a network; communication via a wireless link to said host computer; and communication via the Internet.

12. The system of Claim 9 further comprising: a user interface coupled
15 to said peripheral computer system, said user interface operable for allowing a user to update a set of said plurality of communication protocols, said set applicable only to said user.

13. The system of Claim 9 further comprising: a system administrator
20 interface coupled to said host system, said system administrator interface operable for allowing a system administrator to update a set of said plurality of communication protocols, said set applicable to all users.

14. The system of Claim 9 wherein said communication protocol
25 restricts data volume communicated to said peripheral computer system.

15. The system of Claim 9 wherein said communication protocol selects a particular user authentication protocol performed to establish data communication between said peripheral computer system and said host computer system.

16. The system of Claim 9 wherein said communication protocol selects a particular data encryption protocol to be used for data communication between said peripheral computer system and host computer system.

17. The system of Claim 9 wherein said communication protocol selects a particular data set that can be accessed by said peripheral computer system.

18. The system of Claim 9 wherein said peripheral computer system is a personal digital assistant (PDA).

19. An apparatus for transferring information on a host computer system and a personal digital assistant, said apparatus comprising:

a communication link, said communication link connecting said host computer system to said peripheral computer system;

said communication link being made on one transport mechanism of a plurality of transport mechanisms;

architecture on said host computer system, said architecture for determining said one transport mechanism of a plurality of transport mechanisms;

adaptation software residing on said host computer system, said
5 adaptation software operable to determine a communication protocol from a plurality of communication protocols based on said one transport mechanism;

communication software residing on said host computer system, said
communication software operable to transfer data between said host computer
system and said peripheral computer system based on said communication
10 protocol determined by said adaptation software.

20. The apparatus of Claim 19 further comprising: a user parameter
program residing on said peripheral computer system, said user parameter
program operable to allow a set of said plurality of communication protocols to
15 be updated by a given user, said set applicable only to said given user.

21. The apparatus of Claim 19 further comprising: an administrator
parameter program residing on said host computer system, said user
administrator parameter program operable to allow a set of said plurality of
20 communication protocols to be updated by a system administrator, said set
applicable to all users in a system.